MENON): (a) The news item and the letter to the Editor which appeared in "The Telegraph" on the 4th January and 21st February, 1990 respectively have been noted.

(b) and (c) No scientist has been deprived of rightful promotion as alleged. As per the policy with regard to assessment of Scientists for promotion from EI to EII, two parameters needed to be satisfied: (i) Only those scientists who secured a rating above the threshold were to be considered for placement in the higher grade; (ii) In case the number of scientists who crossed the threshold rating exceeded 50 per cent of the total number of scientists appearing for interview, only 50 per cent of the scientists in order of merit would be placed in the higher grade. None of the 3 scientists mentioned secured marks above the threshold fixed by the Assessment Committee.

(d) to (f) A member of the Assessment Committee wrote letter evincing interest with respect to one candidate whose scientific discipline did not fall within the members' field of expertise. Since the decisions are taken by the Committee as a whole and since the said member's expertise did not pertain to the scientific discipline of the candidate, the letters tantamount to undue and unjustified pressure from a member of the Assessment Committee. Normally such acts would attract reprimand. However, in this case, it was decided to close the matter.

Disclosures regarding the Allahabad connection

2284. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the revealing disclosures made in the article entitled 'the Allahabad Connection' which appeared in the Sunday Mail of the 10th June, 1990 raising serious doubts on the bureaucracy at its highest as also the political masters; if so, the details thereof; and

(b) whether Government would make inquiries in the matter and keep them in mind before making fresh promotions, foreign transfers/tours etc.?

THE PRIME MINISTER (SHRI VISHWANATH PRATAP SINGH): (a) and (b) The Government have seen the article published in the 'Sunday Mail', dated 10th June, 1990.

Selection of officers for appointment to senior posts in the Government of India is made only with due regard to seniority, merit and suitability.

"Emerson Football Challenge shield missing from Danapur Contonment Board, Bihar

2285. SHRI SAMAR MUKHERJEE: Will he PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the "Emerson Football Challenge Shield" a hundred years old football tournament costing Rs. 80,000 has been missing from the custody of Danapur Cantonment Board, Bihar, since August 1987;

(b) if so, whether the matter was reported to police;

(c) if so, the details of action taken by the Dinapur police in this regard;

(d) whether Government propose to refer this case to the C.B.I., Patna for investigations and finding out the real culprits; and

(e) if not the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (DR. RAJA RAMANNA): (a) and (b) A very old sheild, deposited in the store room of Danapur Cantonment Board Office, was found missing and the matter was reported to the local police on 1st September, 1987.

(c) to (e) As the matter is under investigation by the local police, no reference to the CBI for enquiry is considered necessary.

Research by NBRI on use of plants as indicators of pollution

2286 SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the National Botanical Research Institute have been engaged in R and D to use plants as indicators of traffic density and air pollution; if so, the details thereof; indicating whether similar work is being done in other laboratories in India and abroad; and

(b) whether these methods are superior to the direct methods of analysis now in use in India and abroad?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (PROF. M. G. K. MENON): (a) Studies conducted by the National Botanical Research Institute (NBRI) at ten selected sites in Lucknow city have revealed direct correlation between sulpnate and lead content in the foilage of plants along the road and the traffic density/pollution density. Studies conducted so far have shown that road side plants can be used for monitoring automobile exhaust pollution. The Central Pollution Control Board has carried out studies on the impact of auto exhaust lead pollution on vegetation in Delhi. Similar work has been carried out in foreign countries also.

(b) These methods have the advantage of showing the long term uptake and efforts of pollutants in the case of biological system; plant uptake of pollutants is of an integrating nature. These methods cannot be a substitute for direct analytical methods.

Research on Biopesticide MCAP in India

2287. SHRI B. K. HARIPRASAD: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether a safe biopesticide MCAP has been developed in USA and cleared by the EPA for release in USA in 1990, as per April 1990 issue of Health for Millions;

(b) whether any trials have been conducted on this biopesticide in order to establish various claims and new features of the biopesticide, and

(c) whether any similar R and D work is in progress in India; if so, the details thereof and with what results?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (PROF. M. G. K. MENON): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Trials with this biopesticide have reportedly been conducted for the control of lepidopteran insects such as Potato Beetle (*Leptninoparsa decemilineata*), maize borer (*Phrauseta nubilalis* and Diamond back moth (*Plutella xylostella*).

(c) The Department of Biotechnology has started projects on the development of pilot scale production technology with the main objective of developing semi-commercial and commercial processes for mass production of biocontrol agents and demonstration of their efficacy in farmers' field. Biological control of target pests affecting field crops include: gram caterpiller (*Hellothis armigera*) on pulses, cotton, millets and oilseeds; leaf caterpiller (*Spodoptera/Litura*) on cotton oilseeds, vegetables and pulses; bollworms on cotton; sugarcane shootborer, and internode borer.